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ON THE ANGLO-SAXON POEM *EXODUS*

No slight responsibility is assumed in any attempt to prepare the text of the so-called Cædmonian *Exodus* for the use of college students and other readers that are expected to lean hard and confidently on editorial guidance. Professor Blackburn has dealt with this responsibility in a manner that must fail to win complete approval. This text is difficult to read, principally because of the numerous errors committed by the scribe; and these errors together with the poet's peculiarities of diction and composition have elicited a considerable aggregation of critical comments and emendations. To Professor Blackburn it has seemed best to present the text in its faulty manuscript-form, and to grant the student the privilege of an independent use of the conjectured readings, giving him further assistance only in the case of the more difficult passages, which are discussed in an appended commentary.

The following observations are for the most part directed at Professor Blackburn's edition,¹ but in some instances this specific aim is, of course, not maintained.

1-7. Professor Blackburn begins his notes by disturbing the grammatical construction of the established epic beginning. The poet has revealed himself at once as no mean artist by his admirable expansion of the traditional formula so as to include within it the effective contrast between *bōte lifes* and *langsumne ræd*. Professor Blackburn's interpretation of *langsumme ræd hælēðum secgan* makes confusion of studied art and is, of course, altogether untenable. Deserving of notice is also the conventional close of this first full and varied chord: *gehýre sē ðe wille!* (Körner, p. 256).

8, 14, 15. The assumed dialectal gen. pl. in -e (*werode*) and the "Northumbrian form" *andsaca* (15) represent a method of defending scribal errors that is contradicted by the inflectional character of the text as a whole. And the unwarranted change of *freom* (14),

which is made clear by *Gúthlāc* 874 and *Andreas* 8, into an unknown word *frēom* (Glossary) is doubly erroneous in method. A new word should never be assumed under slight provocation; but in this case the provocation is less than slight, for it is based on a mistaken notion of what constitutes a long syllable. This same mistake is made conspicuous in other notes, especially at *Dan.* 11.

33-42. *īu gēre* and *caldum witum* put an appropriate emphasis on the antiquity (cf. note on 138-153) of the history, of which the recital is now specifically begun. The reference in *witum* is to the three-fold affliction of the Egyptians just before the departure of the Israelites, namely, the loss of treasure (*Ex.* XI, 2, 3; XII, 35, 36), the death of the first-born, and the overthrowing of the idols (*Ex.* XII, 12; *Num.* XXXIII, 4). The poet selects this culmination of the calamities (not the series of plagues) as the effective cause of the national distress. The first two of these afflictions are handled, interlacingly, in the lines under consideration; the account of the third then follows. Only one detail of the history is heightened for epic effect. The "jewels of silver and the jewels of gold, and raiment" are elevated to the dignity of the national hord. The despoiled citizen gives place, therefore, to the fallen *hordweard* and the defeated *burhweard* (cf. Zeigler, 167-168; and Klaeber, *Archiv* CXIII, 146). The passage is thus clear in all its details. It is necessary, however, to read some such word as *gedrecced* (34), and to observe that *hēaf wæs genīwad, swāfon sele-drēamas, since berofene*, is parenthetic; that the *mānsceaða* is the destroying angel; and that *dugoð forð gewāt* refers to the death of the first-born, on account of which *wōp wæs wīde* (*Ex.* XII, 30). If the poet were plainly logical, not boldly figurative, in his language, we should have *berofenra* (36) to qualify *hordwearda*.

45-47. *Fēond* refers to Satan. The relation between the next two first half-lines may be shown by transposition: *druron dēofolgyld, hergas on helle* (*Ex.* XII, 12; *Num.* XXXIII, 4; see also Holthausen, *Archiv* CXV, 162). The parenthetic (or perhaps paratactic and

¹ *Exodus and Daniel, Two Old English Poems.* Edited by Francis A. Blackburn. Boston: D. C. Heath & Co., 1907.

casual) expression 'Heaven came thither,' may be compared with *þær Drihten cwōm* (91), and *Ps.* XVIII, 9, "He bowed the heavens also, and came down." The figure is not extraordinary, for it merely translates the biblical immediateness of the intervention of Deity, and in a narrowly constructive sense it is no figure at all. The same is true of the description of the judgment executed upon the powers of hell. The two parts of the period, therefore, agree in the strictest manner in character of conception. The rhetorical effect gained by the contrast between the expressions of the two divisions of line 46 should have checked inclination to find fault with the transmitted text; to suggest *healle* (for *helle*); to be uncertain of the meaning of *heofon*; and even to question *þider*.

47. *Dæg was mære* (*Ex.* XII, 42; XIII, 3; cf. *Ps.* CXVIII, 24).

49-53. It is chiefly the construing of the verb *drēah* with the meaning 'endured' that has occasioned the judgment that this passage "is obscure and probably corrupt" (Samuel Moore, *Modern Philology*, IX, 94). The solution of the difficulty, probably lies, therefore, in admitting the use of *drēogan* with such meanings as 'execute, devise, perpetrate, impose,' etc. If this verb signifies "ein buntes tun und treiben machen" (Osthoff, *Beiträge* VIII, 276), there must be caution in restricting its applications. Indeed the citations of its use in the Bosworth-Toller *Dictionary* warrant the admission of the sense required to make the passage under consideration clear: 'as then that *ealdwērige* (weak adj. form) *Egypta folc* for many seasons had imposed (*drēah*) captivity (*fæsten*), when (*þæs þe*) they' (the Egyptians), etc. It should not be necessary to add that the meter requires *on langne* (53).

60. *lyfthelme* is not the 'pillar of cloud,' but belongs to the description of the country. It is fog and mist that thatched *land heora*, and a damp waste (*mōr*) extended its reach (*hēald*—*hēold*) over the marches (*mearchofu*).

79. *dægscealdes hlēo*. The Icel. *himin-targa* as an epithet of the sun is cited by Mr. Toller (see the *Dictionary s. v. hlēow* and the *Supple-*

ment s. v. dægsceald); and this represents the judgment that accepts or inclines to accept the poet's puzzling expression as a figurative name of the sun. Holthausen, on the other hand, supports the interpretation of the passage that refers the figure to the 'pillar of cloud,' and suggests the reading *swealoðes hlēo*, 'Schutz gegen die Tageshitze?' He adds: "nach der Vorstellung des Dichters hat Gott ein Schutzdach zwischen den Wolken und den oberen Himmel, der Bahn der Sonne, geschaffen, um die Israeliten gegen deren Strahlen zu schützen" (*Archiv* CXV, 163). But this positive statement does not set aside the improbability of reference to the 'pillar' in the context, *wand ofer wolcnum*; this can only be said of the sun (*Beiträge* XIX, 460). Now, does not the ms. report just such an appellation of the sun as a septentrional poet might be expected to employ? The change of *dægs-* into *dæges-* (or *dæg-*) results in the clearest and most appropriate epithet: *dæges-cealdes hlēo*, 'protection against, or deliverance from, the day-cold?' That the poet should introduce this notion of the sun's function into a passage that gains effect by an emphasis on the oppression of a hot climate may arouse a slight surprise. But if a mitigating implication of the beneficence of the source of light and heat be admitted to be unexpected here, it cannot be said to be altogether out of place; at all events, its connotations would be especially congenial to a poet of the land of nights and winters, with visions of a bright and warm heaven and a dark and cold hell.

100-103.

<i>mōdigra mægen,</i>	<i>Werod eall ārās,</i>
<i>mære magoræswa</i>	<i>swā him Moyses bebēad,</i>
<i>fūs fyrðgetrum;</i>	<i>Metodes folce,</i>

Here *fyrðgetrum*, as an appositive, re-echoes *Werod*, thus completing a stylistic and constructive whole in the strictly conventional manner. To begin and end such a period at the middle of the line is in conformity with the poet's art.

108 f. The interpretation offered in *Mod. Lang. Notes* XVII, 213, is not submitted to the judgment of the reader,—the conjectured

sunne requires a change in punctuation that is not reported; but Professor Blackburn contents himself with the suggestion of an impossible manner of construing *behēold . . . scīnan*.

114-115. *heolstor* whether masc. or neut. (*Beiträge* XIX, 460), as acc. sing. satisfies the sense; and *nēah* ('nearly, almost') *ne mihton . . . āhȳdan* gives the emphasis of restraint from overstatement; the expression is, at all events, well chosen for its concrete particularity.

118-119. See *Mod. Lang. Notes* XVII, 213. The meter does not allow the adv. *ō*, and the proposed *on fērclamme* is strongly confirmed by the parallel function of the phrase *on langne lust* (53).

124. *hȳrde* must, of course, be for *hȳrden* (cf. Professor Blackburn's note against 151), and the meaning, 'hear, obey,' is equally certain.

125-129. Comparison of this period with 100-103 shows that *fūs on forðweg* (129) refers to *scīr werod* (125), not to *segn ofer swēoton* (object of *gesāwon*). The 'dative of the person' (*lēodmagne*) is correct with *forstōd*, 'opposed, hindered,' and the direct object is perhaps implied in *rihte strāte* (cf. *Ice him þæt forstonde*. *Riddles* 17, 8). The subject of the verb is *sāfesten*, as correctly indicated in the Glossary.

130-132. *hīe* is the reflexive object of *wyrpton*; and this appears to be carried forward to *bræddon*. For a discussion of *wyrpan* 'recover, restore one's self, rest,' see Cosijn, *Beiträge* VIII, 573.

138-153. Within the limits of these lines the scribe may have omitted something more than merely the close of line 141; but nothing more is really wanted to make the sense clear. It must be *sē yldra cyning* that has become *ȳrfeward*. Beyond this point Professor Blackburn's interpretation is only partially correct. He is certainly inadvertent in proposing to substitute the name *iosephis* for *hēo his* (146),—a metrical impossibility. A better suggestion would be the name *Moyes*, for that would fit the sense and relieve the line of an obscurity; but it would demand of the meter an unusual, if not a forbidden, anacrusis.

An interpretation of lines 144-149 can be sustained that accepts the reading *ða hēo his* (= Moses) *māgwīnum* (146), and require the change of *mānum trēowum* (149) into *mannum twēonum* (—the two men engaged in the *ānwīg*). This also places the resuming of the story of the exodus at the beginning of the next line, *woldon* (150). The theme of the entire passage is announced in *ymb ānwīge*, which is accepted to mean the 'duel' in which Moses slew the Egyptian. In line 146, *hēo* and *his* refer to the combatants in a manner that is obscure from the modern point of view, but consistent in making each representative of his people: the two men contended on behalf of the two nations. The poet exalts into national significance the incident that had enraged the King (*Ex.* II, 11-15), and he closes a period effectively with a strong description of the mood of the combatants (148, 149), after this wide significance has been understood. The plain meaning, therefore, of *siddan grame wurdon . . . wære bræcon* (see the Glossary for an inadmissible definition of *fretan*) is that the Egyptians, in consequence of the 'duel,' killed the male children born in the homes of the Hebrews (*Ex.* 1, 15-22: *morðor fremedon*),—an edict from which Moses himself had been saved,—and kept violating the ancient national compact by the imposition of hardships on the kin of Moses (*Ex.* I, 11-14: *wrōht berēnedon, wære bræcon*). Unquestionably this epic prominence of the 'duel' is in keeping with the spirit and structure of the poem and its prevailing theme of contest and warfare (cf. the notable expansion at lines 323-330); and the poet can now resume the story of the exodus with an interlacing reference to the early concrete event (*feorhlēan*, 150; *dagweorc*, 151), in which Moses had been victor on behalf of his people (*lēode*, dat. sg.), as still operative in the mind of the Egyptians, who were determined (*woldon*, 150) to be avenged, if the god of the Hebrews would not thwart them in their deadly expedition (*spildsīðe*, 153).

It will now be seen that the poet has gained the effect of two distinct provocations for the hostile pursuit; and that each has in turn been designated 'ancient.' This latter detail is made

clear by allowing a difference in the points of time from which the reckoning is made. The immediate provocation, the three-fold calamity of the death of the first-born, the despoiling of the treasure-hords, and the casting down of the false gods, was in ancient times (*ealdum wítum*, 33), counting from the poet's own day. The remote provocation, was national hatred that had its beginning in the time that was long ago (*sē ðe him lange ær*, 138) from the point of view of the Hebrews in Egypt. It had first manifested itself in the royal decree by which they were unjustly deprived of the land that had been granted them and in the concomitant woes inflicted on them (138-143), and it had afterwards (*siððan*, 144) been greatly intensified because of the *ānwīg*, which led to the fresh inflictions referred to in lines 146, 147. This national hatred, continued undiminished to the time of the exodus, and is thus specifically brought forward as contributing to the intensity of the hostile feeling with which the escaping Hebrews were pursued.

170 f. This episode of horsemanship is so remarkable an echo of *Beowulf* 865-868 (cf. also 916-917) as to appear strange until this relationship has been observed.

184. *twā pūsendo*. Professor Blackburn does not comment on the inadequacy of this numeral (cf. *werod ēacan . . . pūsendmælum* 194-196; *side hergas, eorla unrim* 260-261). Mürkens (p. 72) fails to find an explanation for this detail in its specific form, and Cosijn (*Beiträge* xx, 100) declares that the poet cannot possibly be charged with such a computation: "Ein dichter der sich so etwas vorstellen könnte, würde in Bedlam ein passendes unterkommen finden," and as evidence of the poet's sanity in the use of *pūsendmælum* (196) he refers to the Middle English *Story of Genesis and Exodus* (3213-3218), according to which the army of Pharoah consisted of 'six hundred chariots, fifty thousand horsemen, and ten score thousand (two hundred thousand) footmen.' This enumeration agrees exactly with that in Josephus, Bk. II, ch. xv, and Comestor (Samuel Moore, *Modern Philology* ix, 106), and therefore belongs to the accepted tradition. From this it may be safely con-

cluded that the Cædmonian text has been incorrectly copied at this point, for a simple emendation *twā[hund] pūsendo* restores conformity with the traditional expansion of the biblical account (*Ex.* xiv, 7). On the other hand, the biblical "six hundred" is adhered to, but in a curiously erroneous manner, by the writer of the fragmentary *Pharao* (Grein-Wülker, III, 182). The poet of *Die Altdutsche Exodus* (hrsg. von Ernst Kossman, Strassburg, 1886, 3023-3036) does not avail himself of the tradition, and does not misapply the biblical 'six hundred.'

194. *ēcan* may confidently be changed into *ēacan* 'increased, great, vast' (in the acc. sg., not necessarily or even probably pl.). This disposes of the attempt to get the required meaning out of *ēce* 'eternal,' and is supported by *side hergas, eorla unrim* (260-261).

202. *weredon wælnet* is a well selected figure (the verb is *werian* 'wear'), which is in keeping with the symbol of grief in 212. It may have been suggested, somewhat remotely, by "Dicturusque est Pharoe super filiis Israel: Coarctati sunt in terra, conclusit eos desertum" (*Ex.* xiv, 3).

212. *in blacum rēafum*. There is no room for doubt as to the choice between *blacum* and *blācum*. The error of admitting *blācum* (as in Grein) should not be upheld against the evidence of the meter (cf. *on blacum hrægle, Riddles*, 11, 7). With this symbolic use of 'black' may be compared the poetic values of *deorc, sweart, wann*, etc.; cf. also *weredon wælnet* (202).

214. The importance of this line for the correction of the text of *Beowulf* 386-387, from which it is derived, has been shown in *Mod. Lang. Notes* x, 44.

243. Read *on wīg curon*. Of course, *wīg* does not "mean warriors" (cf. *Num.* I, 3).

249-251. Conjectured *bidon* (for the impossible *būton*) not only suits the sense and is generally accepted, but is also one of those emendations that should satisfy the mind with the conviction of a certainty. It was not a happy thought of Cosijn's that led him to revert to the passage (*Beiträge* xx, 100) to disturb a settled state of mind by insisting, if *bidon* be

accepted, on the sequence of the subjunctive *bræce*, which would destroy the meter. Moreover, the expectant subjunctive would introduce a variation in the expression that would not be in accord with the poet's conception (in agreement with the biblical record) of the manner in which the Israelites regarded the miraculous guide. Its manifestations and movements were never 'awaited' but were always a fresh wonder to them. The lines in question are, of course, involved in the poet's method of dealing with the record of *Ex. xiv, 19, 20*. At line 205 the interposing agent is exclusively the *mihtig engel*, according to the first clause of *Ex. xiv, 19*; and in turn it is exclusively the pillar of cloud that appeared at the front of the host, towards the sea, altho the personification in *sǣboda* (250) may reflect a blending of the two agents. The Middle English poet, it may be observed, has not mentioned the 'cloud' before it is represented as leading the people across the sea. To return to the syntax of the lines, it is manifest that the indicative *bræc* is correct; for the people were still in doubt and despair, 'until the time when' (*hwonne*) the light of the guide 'broke' thru the obstructions of the sky. The contrasted subjunctive after *hwonne* is fittingly employed in *nēosan cōme* (475).

265. *ægnian* does not mean 'vex, torment,' but 'own, control as a possession,' etc. It is a variant of *āgnian*; cf. the variation between *āgan* and *ægan*; *āgen* (419) and *ægen*; also *ānga* (*āngan*, 403) and *ænga*.

277. Read *lifigendra lēoð*. The metrical type favors the double alliteration, and the construction (*lēoð* acc. in apposition with *stefne*) is satisfactory. The reading *lēoð* (for *pēoð*) is made incontestable by *lēofes lēoþ* (308) together with *swēg* and *sanges bland* (309), which describe the same utterance; *wiglēoð* (221) also supports the conjecture. As a happily coined epithet, 'song of the living' expresses the import of deliverance from death.

278. The retention of *to* as belonging to the second half-line is forbidden metrically. Its transference to the end of the first half-line would occasion a doubtful change from the more probable A-type. It would seem best to

cancel *to*, and to look on it as having its place in the ms. by reason of hesitancy in choosing between *to* and *on*, which are both used with *lōcian*.

283. *wæter wealfæsten*. Thorpe's cancellation of *and* is to be preferred. The juxtaposition of subject and object is a characteristic feature of the poet's devices: cf. *Abraham Isaac* (398); *mearchofu mōr hēold* (61); *flōd blōd gewōd* (462); *sand sǣcir span*, or *spāw* (291); (cf. *holm heolfre spāw*, 450); *lagu land gefēol* (483), etc.

291. *sand sǣcir spān* (or *spāw*?); cf. The Middle English Poem, 3242: *A wind blew ðe se fro the sand*.

323-326. *be þām herewisan* clearly refers neither to the lion-standard nor to Pharaoh. The poet is conceiving the action to be in the spirit of the *comitatus*, and the *herewisa*, who might be supposed to be the chief of Judah, is certainly Moses, in accordance with the prevailing note of the poem. Here, again, a significant detail may be noticed in the Middle English poem (p. 92): 'Mose went first, and then the men of Judah'; and the Anglo-Saxon poet agrees with this not only in the lines under consideration but also in the two parentheses *ān wisode* and *þy hē mære wearð* (348-349), which are then, according to the stylistic devise of placing the 'relative' before its antecedent, specifically defined in *swā him Moises bēad* (352). 'The retainers were not minded,' so runs the text therefore, 'so long as he their leader survived (*be him lifigendum*), to endure the reproach (*hynðo*) of any people' (*ðeoda ænigre*). Professor Blackburn's rendering of the absolute clause, *be him lifigendum*, is made impossible by the grammatical principle that the subject of an absolute clause cannot be the subject of the verb of the sentence.

327-328. Might one not read *hægstealda mōd* (cf. 489), construing *wæpna wælskihtes* of the next line as the gen. with *unforhte*?

345. *ofer garsecge* (Graz). Professor Blackburn occasionally deviates into a surprising contradiction of the inviolable laws of the meter. An especially misleading instance of this is his conjecture that *ofer*, in the cited

phrase, may be read *ofer*, 'shore' (which is accordingly placed in the Glossary). This leads to a misconstruing of *becwôm*, not only in the context but also at line 447, where *flôdegas becwôm* is, of course, a complete sentence.

362. *Nōē oferlād* has been shown to be strictly metrical (∠ x x ∠; Sievers, *Beiträge*, xix, 449, note). In scanning the second occurrence of this proper name (378), however, Sievers has gone into needless detail; *pæt from Nōē* is simply: ∠ x ∠ x, A-type.

373. *mismicelra*. This form of the gen. pl. of the comparative is explained in Sievers-Cook, § 231, 4.

383. *hē on wræce lifde*. This seemingly unimportant detail acquires a significance when it is noticed that it is directly due to *Gen.* xxi, 34. A view is thus given of the poet selecting available incidents.

386. That *seone* is 'Zion' cannot be questioned. The wide-spread tradition that the mount on which Abraham offered sacrifice was the same as that on which Solomon afterwards built the temple is also accepted by the Middle English poet (*Genesis and Exodus*, p. 37). See also *Modern Philology* ix, 101.

399. *nō pȳ fægra wæs*. Clearly *fægra* is for *fægenra* (hardly for *fægerra*), and should not be assigned to *fæge*. Professor Blackburn's note is altogether astray. The terms of comparison must not be completed by 'than was Isaac,' for the whole line refers to Abraham exclusively. This use of the comparative occurs also at line 259 (*pȳ forhtran*), and in a positive sentence, without the instrumental, in *gylp wearð gnornra* (455), and it is commented on by Sievers in his edition of the *Heliand* (p. 508, note 323). Both Cosijn (*Beiträge* xx, 103) and Klaeber (*Archiv* cxiii, 147) are needlessly troubled about the idiom.

427-431. Mr. Toller in his *Supplement* (s. v. *behwylfan*) translates the chief portion of these lines: "heaven and earth cannot form a vault that shall [may] cover his glory's word [words], too wide and too ample for the globe and the firmament on high to embrace." This is in agreement with his more partial translation s. v. *sīd*, and differs from the rendering given in the older part of the *Dictionary* (s. v.

behwylfan) in construing *word* as object. Mr. Toller has not left much room for doubt, for the poet must have had in mind such scripture as *Is.* lv, 8-11 (cf. also xl, 8, li, 6; *Ps.* cii, 25-27; *Jer.* xxxi, 37; *Mt.* v, 18; *Mk.* xiii, 31; *Luke* xvi, 17, xxi, 33, etc.). But one cannot be certain that he has assigned the right meaning to *behwylfan*. Why not be guided by the unquestioned meaning of *āhwylfan* (see *Supplement*), 'overturn, depose, bring to naught'? The verb *mæg*, it may be added, is correctly singular in form because of the coördination of the subject, and *mæge* (429) must be made plural.

432. Read *nū āð swereð*.

460-463. *herewōpa mæst*, as direct object of *cyrmdon*, belongs to the sentence closed with *fægum stæfnum*. The important point to observe is that *storm* is here used not figuratively, as assumed in the glossaries, but literally. Tradition reports a 'storm' at the time of the destruction of the Egyptians. Josephus gives a vivid picture of it, and adds the comment, "so that there was not one man left to be a messenger of this calamity to the rest of the Egyptians" (cf. lines 456-457; 509-514; and *Ex.* xiv, 28; *Ps.* cvi, 11). Comestor quotes *Ex.* xiv, 24, and imputes the description of the storm to the enemy: "id est intolerabiles imbres, et gravia tonitrua; coruscationesque ac lampades infecit super eos." The Middle English poet, observing the same connection with "the morning watch," writes:

*And so sprong ðe daiening,
ðhunder, and leuene, and rein ðor-mong
God sente on ðat hird, stið and strong.*

466-471. A full pause is required after *corðre*. The next periodic expression is a 'recurrence' of 457 f., from which several of the principal words are repeated. In accordance with this agreement between the two periods (cf. e. g. *mægen wæs ādrenced* and *mægen wæs on cwealme*), one need not hesitate to abandon further attempts to retain *nep* (470), but may confidently write *weg* (cf. *wegas*, 458),—a change that involves no contradiction of paleographic probabilities. The retreat (*eft oncyrde*, 452; *Ex.* xiv, 25) of the

Egyptians was cut off (*cyrr swiðrode*) as they were marching back (*wigbord scinon*) between the walls of the sea (*holmweall āstāh*); but they then discovered that they were caught in a death-trap (*māgen was on cwealme, fæste gefeterod*), and that their way out was beset by fatal snares: *forðganges weg, searwum āsæled*.

471. 'The sand (=the bottom of the sea; cf. 291, and *ēce staðolas* of 474; *land* of 483; and the conjectured *grund* of 503) awaited (*bāsnode*, for *barenode*; cf. *Mod. Lang. Notes* III, 37) the fated army, until the sea should return to its accustomed place.' Vigorous epithets are bestowed upon the avenging waters: 'the unarmed messenger of distress' (*nacud nýðboda*) and 'the hostile spirit of war' (*fāh fēðegāst*).

485-489. A succession of guesses often leads to the desired result; and there may be no further value in the following suggestion than that of encouragement of further efforts to recover the right reading of the half-line that is now surely misrepresented by the scribe's *werbeamas*. The place of error is probably at the middle of the word, and the transmitted form may be regarded as a perversion of *wēgstrēamas*, the perversion leading to the further blunder of omitting the governing preposition. At all events, *on wēgstrēamas* (= *in mediis fluctibus*, *Ex.* XIV, 27) gives clear sense and good meter. If the sense of the next sentence be, 'They could not restrain (*forhabban*) the path of the helping [waves], the rage of the sea-streams,' the conjectured *hwelpendra* (*Mod. Lang. Notes* XVII, 213) must be withdrawn.

499. Paleographically it is easy to obtain *brim* from *brun* (*im* and *un* being so similar in appearance; cf. *ungrundes*, 509, where *unrimdes* would suit the sense). One is, therefore, tempted to suggest *brim-ypinge* (= *brimes yppinge*), or *brim yppende*.

581. *afrisc mēowle*. The almost unanimously accepted interpretation of this expression is endorsed by Cosijn (*Beiträge* xx, 106): "hier zweifellos die jüdische *mēowle*, welche sich putzt." But *afrisc* has remained a *crux*. It is herewith proposed to regard *afrisc* as a scribal error for *ebrisc* (or *ebresc* = *ebreisc*, *Hebreisc*;

cf. *Gen.* 2021, *Christ* 133, and *Elene* 559). Paleographically the resemblance between the interchanged words is very close. Perhaps not altogether negligible is the confirmation of this suggestion that may be suspected in the poet's selection of the vowel *e* to alliterate with the name in *Dan.* 1 and 78. On the other hand, it is true that in *Exodus* the name *Israela* is used exclusively (in *Daniel* it alternates with *Hebreas*); but that does not establish a necessary preference in the case of the adjective. At all events, it is noteworthy that the poets furnish no instance of the use of *Israelisc*, which might otherwise with consistency have been expected to occur in the *Exodus*.

JAMES W. BRIGHT.

Thomas Percy und William Shenstone: Ein Briefwechsel aus der Entstehungszeit der Reliques of Ancient English Poetry. Herausgegeben mit Einleitung und Anmerkungen von Dr. HANS HECHT, ao. Professor an der Universität Basel. Quellen und Forschungen, CIII, pp. xxxvi, 1-145, Strassburg, Karl J. Trübner, 1909.

Few books of recent years contain within the compass of so few pages so much entertaining and instructive reading, as is to be found in the ninety and odd pages of the *Percy-Shenstone* correspondence. And, excepting Boswell's *Johnson*, I know of no description of the intellectual life of England in the mid-years of the eighteenth century which leaves such a vivid and pleasing impression on the mind of the reader. He feels himself not only interested, but an actual participant in the various questions concerning literature and art which Shenstone and Percy touch upon in their letters.

One who is not already familiar with Shenstone's personality as it is revealed in other writings than his rather insignificant poetry, is agreeably surprised to find him such a gifted letter-writer and such a genial human being. Everybody who has read the English poets of the eighteenth century knows of Shenstone's